

EVERYDAY MODIFICATIONS FOR YOUR MGB, GT AND GTV8

EVERYDAY MODIFICATIONS



Roger Parker

A fascinating and useful book

This new book by Roger Parker in the "Everyday Modifications" series published by Crowood Press contains a wealth of useful tips on upgrades and improvements you can add to an MGB or GTV8. It's a well-illustrated book with 362 photographs (359 colour and 3 black & white) in a 208 page paperback.

Very few cars have the staying power to shrug off the effects of the passing years in how they look and feel when driven on the road, but the MGB and updated GTV8 are timeless classics. They have a continuing attraction to so many people more than 50 or 40 years after their launch. Most owners adjust to the realities of the period handling, performance, comfort and lack of sophistication when compared with modern cars they drive today - instead they enjoy the feel and sound of a car from another era with so much driver appeal. In his new book Roger Parker suggests there are few owners who will not occasionally wonder what could be done to bring some aspects of their car a little more up to date. But he

feels they fall into two broad groups – those who want to keep the car as it was when manufactured, or nearly so, and those who welcome "improvements" to their driving experience. The key word is "improvements" and the definition varies from owner to owner but the effects of any improvements on the value of the car and whether they meet legal requirements is important.

Roger starts with security and safety modifications in terms of anti-theft considerations and basics in terms of how to work safely on a car when making modifications, complying with necessary vehicle regulations, notifying motor insurers of material modifications and ensuring an adequate agreed value as part of the classic car insurance cover.

Chrome bumper conversions of rubber bumpered MGBs are often considered by owners but the full scope of work necessary to achieve even a reasonable job may not be fully appreciated. Roger describes what is involved.

Of course some longstanding MGB conversions have become collectors' items in their own right – Costello MGBV8s and rare Lenham convertibles with a cabriolet appearance, but also other good quality conversions like the Huntsman MGBV8 conversions that were produced by David Franklin. Currently there is the Frontline LE50 MGBGT and recently their new MGB Roadster.

Roger reviews the brake and suspension upgrades including the dual circuit brake servo retrofit and ride height adjustments. Upgrades with poly bushes providing better suspension location and performance and more radical suspension upgrades with Hoyle, Frontline or MGOC options are covered. For example the Hoyle IRS bolt on kit enables a Ford back axle and disc brakes to be used, even with a limited slip differential too. With the conditioning from driving family cars with power steering and greater grip from improved tyre compounds and designs, electric power assisted steering or EPAS or hydraulic PAS options

are becoming popular with many owners.

Wheel upgrades have been a popular bolt on option with the iconic Minilite being popular for so many years but often a wire wheel conversion from standard steel wheels is chosen. A new all alloy "Dunlop V8 composite look alike" wheel is now available from Clive Wheatley.

Roger reviews the range of engine modifications – the engine choices and the management systems, particularly the Efi systems where Roger was an early converter, so much so his car was reviewed by a Rover Group senior management meeting in 1989 from which the successful RV8 Adder Project evolved to revive the MG brand.

A particularly topical section, not only for MGB enthusiasts but also owners with Midgets, MGCs and other cars of that era and later like the RV8, covers lighting upgrades, both headlights and front and rear lamp upgrades. Replacement LED bulbs provide improved lighting and a much lower current on the wiring loom. His guide to the regulations covering which models can have the upgrades is essential reading. His comparative rear lamp photos of original filament bulbs and LEDs illustrate how good the improvement in lighting can be which helps overcome the poor "relative visibility" of a classic car on modern roads. He also reviews the slightly controversial topic of retrofitting daytime running lights or DRLs which again aim to improve relative visibility during daylight hours when headlights are not normally on.

The essential single 12v battery conversion to replace the original twin 6v battery arrangement is also covered, possibly the most useful upgrade and least visible!

It's a very thorough and authoritative book and one most MGB and GTV8 enthusiasts will find a useful source of information and advice. At the discounted price of £15.99 plus delivery from the Crowood Press online site it is also very good value too. Victor Smith

[Crowood Press website for the book](#)